Facing The Challenge

THE REPORT OF THE STUDY GROUP ON HOURS OF WORK

Philip Warren
Chair

January 2003

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FACING THE CHALLENGE

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JANUARY 2003

STUDY GROUP ON HOURS OF WORK

January 28, 2003

Honourable Judy Foote
Minister of Education
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL

Dear Minister:

We are pleased to submit the Report of the Study Group on Hours of Work.

This study was undertaken following a strike by NAPE employees in 2001 and a difficult set of negotiations by CUPE. While all parties have attempted to restore an atmosphere of goodwill and teamwork since then, the Unions left little doubt during our hearings that future relationships depend on the successful completion of this study and the implementation of its recommendations. You will recall, of course, that, in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Premier Grimes and President Hanlon of NAPE, it was agreed that the findings of this Study Group would be implemented.

In submitting this Report, we record our appreciation to the many organizations, groups and individuals who contributed through their presentations and advice. They are listed in the appendices. We would also like to express our appreciation to officials of the Department of Education, particularly Robert Young and Theresa Newman. Without them, this Report could not have been completed so expeditiously. We thank Veronica Harvey for her work in helping with the research and preparing the draft document.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to conduct this review and for your support and encouragement throughout the course of our work. We believe that implementing our recommendations will do much to address the needs of secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel and enhance the quality of education for students throughout the Province.

Sincerely yours,

Philip Warren
Chair

David Curtis
NAPE Representative

Bruce Sheppard
School Board Representative

Rex Hillier
CUPE Representative

Barry Roberts
School Board Representative

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel have an important part to play in the development of a productive learning climate. Too often in the past, however, their contributions have not been fully recognized, particularly in terms of remuneration and other employee benefits. The longer we wait to address some of their legitimate demands, the more morale and productivity will suffer and the educational needs of students will be negatively impacted.

In public consultations throughout the Province, we received a great deal of thoughtful advice on the problems faced by secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel and the changes needed in the school board operating grant system to address these problems. While school boards, union members, principals, and parents all argued for more hours of work and, therefore, more funding for such staffing, they were not outrageous in their expectations. They recognized the fiscal challenges facing the Province at this time.

We, too, have recognized the fiscal challenges currently facing the Province. Consequently, we have made recommendations that are both financially realistic and educationally sound. We believe that the recommendations presented in this Report represent minimum funding levels that should be achieved immediately. Not only have we recommended more funding for these components of the grant system, but we have also recommended a different approach to allocation. We recognize as well that further increases will have to be made in the technical component and other components of the grant system, following the proposed comprehensive grant review.

The recommendations made in this Report will cost an estimated $9.5 million for a full year: $2.1 million for secretarial; $2.9 million for janitorial/maintenance personnel; $2 million for severance, sick leave and other collective bargaining leaves; and $2.5 million for technical support. Such funds will provide school boards and schools with the means to advance the achievement of our educational objectives.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origin of the Study Group

The Study Group on Hours of Work had its origin in the collective bargaining process. In September 2001, some 870 school board support workers employed by seven different school boards went on strike. These employees were represented by the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE). At the time of the strike, there were three outstanding issues, namely: (1) past practices, (2) suitability, and (3) crucial issues surrounding "hours of work" and job security.

Early in October, a special mediator, Victor Young, was appointed to help resolve the issues. Mediation discussions between all parties, including the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, took place throughout the month, resulting in a resolution of the issues of past practice and suitability. Such was not the case, however, for those issues surrounding "hours of work and job security." Indeed, discussion on these issues revealed deep divisions. The mediator concluded that the Union and the employer held positions that were irreconcilable.

The strike was prolonged, primarily because of the issues surrounding "hours of work". These issues impacted directly on the income, morale and self-esteem of workers. Employees argued that school boards had long utilized "hours of work" as a budgetary tool to address fiscal restraint. This contributed to an environment of animosity and mistrust. Employers argued that acceptance of employee demands for guaranteed hours would impact directly on their rights to manage the school system in a period of declining enrolments and fiscal restraint.

The mediator was able to find areas of common ground, however, which led to a return to work. One such area related to the establishment of a Study Group to review secretarial and janitorial/maintenance services as recommended by the Williams-Sparkes Report, with NAPE as a member (Recommendation 5). The mediator also proposed that "hours of work" not be changed from September 2001 to June 2003. In other words, there should be no reduction in "hours of work" for the first two years of the three-year agreements. This would provide a breathing space for the study of "hours of work" to be finalized and for an open and consultative environment to be created wherein trust could return to the daily relationships impacting support workers.

One day after the Mediation Report was presented, Premier Roger Grimes and President Tom Hanlon of NAPE signed a Memorandum of Understanding accepting Recommendation 5. The MOU stated that the study should be completed by March 31, 2002. Very significant, however, was another clause stating that the findings of the Study Group would be implemented. The MOU read as follows:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Re: Recommendation # 5

> "It is understood that both parties accept Recommendation # 5 of the Mediation Report and Recommendations submitted on October 28, 2001 by Mr. Vic Young. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador agrees that NAPE will be a member of the Study Group on the "Hours of Work" for secretarial services and janitor/maintenance services as recommended by the recent Williams-Sparkes Panel Report. This Study should be completed by March 31, 2002. The findings of this Study Group will be implemented.
>
> It is further agreed that the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees will immediately recommend acceptance of the findings of the mediation report and also recommend that the school board workers return to work immediately."

After the Study Group was announced, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) reminded the Minister of Education that, in September 2001, a similar study had been agreed to in its negotiations. A letter to the Union from the Chief Negotiator of the Employer Bargaining Unit stated that "*The Employer agrees, in consultation with the Union, to undertake an assessment of current bargaining unit hours of work in schools, in relation to the assigned work, to determine a desirable standard.*" CUPE's letter to the Minister of Education enquired whether the CUPE review would be conducted separately, or as part of a more general review. It recommended a joint study. CUPE represents the support staff of four school boards, including Avalon East, the largest in the Province.

On March 6, 2002, the Minister of Education agreed with CUPE's proposal. The Study Group would now be broadened to include representatives of both unions and both sets of employers. The Chair appointed for the NAPE Study Group would also chair the combined group. The evolution of the structure and operation of the joint Study Group is described later in this Chapter.

1.2 The Study Group's Mandate and Membership

The primary mandate of the Study Group was to review the Department of Education's funding formula for the allocation of secretarial and janitorial/maintenance support services for schools in the Province and make recommendations for change.

Early in its operation, the Study Group was forced to examine whether or not its mandate included the issue of technical support for schools. In the Williams-Sparkes Report, technical support was linked with secretarial support. In practice, because no grant had been provided specifically for technical support, funding for technicians had come largely from the areas of janitorial and maintenance. Therefore, the Study Group concluded that technical support was a component of the "hours of work" issue and part of its mandate.

After CUPE's request for inclusion was approved, considerable discussion took place concerning the structure and operation of the Study Group. The result was the establishment of two Study Panels, one to conduct hearings with NAPE and the other with CUPE, together with the respective school boards and their stakeholders. It was agreed that the Panels would combine to hear the submissions of presenters with a province-wide focus and then form the Study Group to prepare the final report.

The following comprised the individual panels and the joint Study Group:

NAPE PANEL

Chair	Phil Warren
Union Representative	David Curtis, Labour Relations Consultant
Employer Representative	Bruce Sheppard, Director, Avalon West School Board

CUPE PANEL

Chair	Phil Warren
Union Representative	Rex Hillier, President, CUPE Local 2212, St. Anthony
Employer Representatives	Barry Roberts, Director, Burin Peninsula School Board

STUDY GROUP

Chair	Phil Warren
Union Representatives	David Curtis and Rex Hillier
Employer Representatives	Bruce Sheppard and Barry Roberts

Hearings for the Panels and the Study Group had been originally planned for the Spring of 2002. Because of the time required to restructure the process and expand the schedule of hearings, the date for completion of the Report was extended to the end of the year.

1.3 Sources of Information

To fulfil its mandate, the Study Group members identified a number of activities that should be undertaken. Preliminary meetings were held, related documents and literature were reviewed, briefs were solicited from interested individuals and groups, and hearings were conducted throughout the Province. As the work of the Study Group progressed, a number of organizations were invited to submit their views and recommendations. As well, the Study Group examined a selection of formal job descriptions and related policies and practices in a small number of jurisdictions elsewhere in Canada.

The call for submissions resulted in over 100 briefs (See Appendix A). Individuals and groups appeared across the Province to discuss their views, beginning on September 30, 2002. Appendix B provides a list of submissions heard in Marystown, Corner Brook, St. Anthony, Clarenville, Gander, Lewisporte, Grand Falls-Windsor, Springdale, Happy Valley, Wabush, Stephenville, Channel-Port Aux Basques, St. John's, Bay Roberts and Placentia. The breadth and depth of the briefs and hearings gave the Study Group a most valuable base for its conclusions and recommendations.

The most surprising finding of the analysis of related literature was the almost total omission of the roles of support staff. Even those sections of the texts dealing with the important topic of community relations largely ignore the public relations responsibilities of the secretary. Janitorial and maintenance support was barely mentioned in the discussion of school facilities.

1.4 The Need for the Study

The need for this study was acknowledged by the Williams-Sparkes Report in 2000. In its preamble to Recommendation 52, the Report documented demands for expanded services in the areas of secretarial and technical support for schools because of the contribution such services made to the quality of school life. The Williams-Sparkes Report also called for a review of the janitorial and maintenance grants for school boards. The Williams-Sparkes Panel heard numerous concerns related to the maintenance of schools. While the Report commended the Government for the substantial investment to upgrade facilities in terms of air quality and other improvements, it noted that the Panel had heard repeatedly that there was disparity in the cleaning and maintenance resource allocation between schools and other public buildings. Consequently, in Recommendation 70, the Williams-Sparkes Report recommended that the Department of Education's Grant Review Committee examine the area of school maintenance to determine whether grants were adequate to ensure a clean and healthy environment for learning.

The recommendation in the Young Mediation Report leading to the establishment of this Study Group was one of the key recommendations of that Report. Commenting directly on the recommendation, Mr. Young expressed the view that the results of this study would be crucial to the long-term resolution of the issue of hours of work and job security for support workers. To further emphasize the importance

of this study, he argued that the Study Group's findings and recommendations would lay the foundation for a long-term cure to the issues that had plagued the current round of negotiations. The fact that Recommendation 5 was endorsed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Premier and the President of NAPE, with a statement that the findings would be implemented, provided additional proof of the importance of the present study. The fact that CUPE had agreed to a similar review as part of its negotiations provided the Study Group with a province-wide focus.

During its tour, the Study Group heard repeatedly that this study was both timely and important to school boards, central office staff, school administrators, teachers and parents. Certainly, the unions wanted to be heard on the issues being addressed. Some very passionate individual and group presentations were made. It could be argued that for those involved in the labour dispute of 2001, the hearings themselves began a healing process, hopefully leading to a solution of some of the problems identified by the Group. The Study Group believes that resolving these problems and restoring an environment of good-will, trust and teamwork on the part of all stakeholders is crucial to the provision of quality education for our children.

CHAPTER 2: THE CHANGING CONTEXT

Over the past four or five months, the Study Group has heard a great deal about the importance of support staff in education and the need to finance them more adequately. Not only have we heard about the need for more funds for this purpose, but also for a more equitable distribution of these funds. Many consider this challenge one of the most important now facing our school system.

Why has this issue acquired such importance in the recent past? Among possible explanations are the changes that have taken place in the education system and the challenge of providing adequate funding for education generally.

2.1 The Changing School System

Heightened Public Expectations

Over the past decade, public debate regarding educational reform in Newfoundland and Labrador has increased public awareness of education and its importance, not only to individuals but also to the society as a whole. Both the Royal Commission of the early 1990s and the Ministerial Panel of the late 1990s resulted in extensive consultation and widespread debate. The reports "*Our Children Our Future* (1992)" and "*Supporting Learning* (2000)" were highly publicized, resulting in heightened public expectations for educational improvements. The commitment of the Government to implement the recommendations of both reports further increased these expectations, as did the focus on literacy and the new emphasis on education in our rural communities, as fewer people perceive viable options in the fishery for future generations. Many now acknowledge that the best hope for the future is a good education.

Public education has also been the subject of increasing attention on the national scene. Public schools and school boards have come under increasing attack as parents, business groups, and other stakeholders have questioned the effectiveness of public schooling. Educational standards have become a concern as provinces are now compared on national and international tests. Such pressures have created a climate of increasing expectations for education.

As a result of the Schools Act, 1997, these heightened expectations were combined with newly created political mechanisms to give voice to parents and local stakeholders. The Act created fully elected schools boards and introduced a new political entity, school councils, charged with representing the educational interests of their particular school. School boards are now front line, having to be politically responsible and accountable to the electorate, including school councils, other political lobby groups, parents, various community agencies, provincial politicians and the Government as a whole.

Heightened expectations exist for all aspects of school today, including support services. Parents no longer accept that support services are optional. Many regulations and practices were developed in a previous time when such services were viewed as luxuries. The public now expect school parking lots and building entrances to be kept free of snow and ice. Similarly, municipalities expect all school properties to be landscaped and properly maintained during the summer months. The time is long past when parents and community leaders cleaned schools on a monthly basis, made draperies for the stage in the school auditorium and for classroom windows, and fund-raised to support building maintenance.

Generally, parents expect clean, safe, healthy school environments. Expectations are increasing in this regard as citizens become better informed and more aware of the relationships between environmental issues and long-term health. The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) clearly articulated their concerns respecting support services:

> At the Annual General Meeting of NLFSC for the past three years, the lack of sufficient resources (guidance, library, technical, secretarial, janitorial, etc.) was pinpointed as one of the problems in our educational system. Resolutions have been passed regarding these issues. These resolutions and concerns of our membership have been brought to the attention of the Minister of Education in meetings with her over the past two years (97).[1]

The public also expects schools to report on their performance. All schools are required to publish school reports at the end of each school year. As well, all schools, through the principal, are expected to develop school development plans and to have them approved by the school council. School development plans focus on improvement and are developed in the context of school achievement indicators. These new requirements, resulting from the Schools Act 1997, have been shouldered by the school system without additional resources or supports. Both the school reports and the school development process are dependent upon the effective management of school-level data.

Declining Student Enrolment

School enrolments in Newfoundland and Labrador peaked in 1971-72 at 162,818. Since then, enrolments have declined, the result of changing fertility rates, an aging population and substantial net out-migration. The student population in 2001-02 had fallen to 86,898. Many school buildings were built during the growth period prior to 1971-72 and as a result of aging

[1]The numbers associated with quotations indicate the brief from which the quotations were taken. See Appendix A.

now require more maintenance. With board consolidation in 1997, many schools were consolidated, as well. School consolidation has resulted in increased populations in existing buildings, with no additional funding for janitorial and maintenance, further taxing already aging structures.

The school of the 1960s and 1970s were constructed in different times with different expectations. As a result, janitorial/maintenance support staff demands are more often dictated by the unique realities of the school plant, while funding is provided by square footage. Many schools have no lunch room or cafeteria facility. As a result, students eat in their classrooms or in multipurpose rooms. Proper clean-up from lunch requires focused time and effort by the janitorial/maintenance worker that might not be required in a school with a dedicated room for lunch. The NLTA recognized this issue in its submission as follows:

> With children being bussed greater distances, most schools now have to provide eating facilities at lunch time. However, frequently there is no cafeteria and these children eat in classrooms, multipurpose rooms and corridors. This adds greatly to the mess that a caretaker has to clean up (98).

Increasingly, schools sponsor breakfast programs for all children. The organization and cleanup from such a program result in extra responsibilities on the custodial staff, as well.

The consolidation of schools has created a need for improved communications. Most students now travel long distances by school bus. Parents must be able to maintain contact with the school in order to inform their children of any schedule changes. In order to ensure the comfort level expected by parents in this regard, the school must be able to provide a "live" communication service to all parents throughout the entire day, a matter discussed in more detail in the section *Safe Schools*, below.

Safe Schools

Public expectations regarding needed supports to ensure that schools are safe for their children have risen sharply during the last decade.

Incidents, such as the tainted water tragedy in Walkerton, Ontario, the student shooting in Taber, Alberta, and incidences of bullying, severe beatings and other violent crimes that have occurred "even" in rural Newfoundland have shaken people's level of confidence that schools in Newfoundland and Labrador are safe. The Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education (NLADE) and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association (NLSBA) placed student safety at the top of their list of reasons to have schools adequately staffed, noting that:

> ...most important of all the security of the building and the safety of students are jeopardized when schools are not adequately staffed (101).

School councils and parents insist on having assurances that the school environment (air quality, etc.) will not have a negative impact on their children's health. For example, the NLTA observed that:

> ..there has been an increase in incidents of children with asthma and allergies. Some attribute the air quality and dust levels of schools as causes of these medical outbreaks. Whether this is true or not, some of the public are extra critical of the physical conditions of schools. Therefore, we must strive to provide as clean an environment as possible (98).

Parents want to be able to communicate with the school as needed in order to ensure that their children are not left unattended during the day. They will not tolerate a lapse in communication between the school and home that causes a child to arrive at an empty house or locked door when they arrive home from school that may be 30 or more kilometers away. NAPE recognized concerns related to such expectations as follows:

> Daily communication between schools and parents has been severely limited as a result of not having a full time administrative worker on staff. The telephone rings many times a day with calls from parents checking to see if their child has given the teacher a note that was sent along, or a change in busing requirements for the day. Absenteeism is followed up by phone with parents daily because we are concerned that young children may have left home and not arrived at school (99).

Both the NLADE and the NLSBA recognized the increased importance of communications through adequate and dependable telephone communications, as well. They noted that:

> ...the consolidation of school boards and schools has resulted in larger schools, catering to children from larger geographical areas.... Schools are frequently called upon to deal with emergencies and the numerous incidental problems that arise through school busing activities (101).

Schools as Community Centers

Schools and school boards recognize that community partnerships are essential if they are to serve the educational needs of all children. Partnerships not only resource schools and provide work experience, they help educators integrate academic teaching with the practical needs

required by students to be successful in the global economy. As well, they contribute to building, in each of our communities, a culture that values education and is supportive of educational programs.

As schools nurture such partnerships, however, there is increasing pressure to make the school building accessible to community groups. In rural communities, in particular, schools are often the only large public facility available for community use. The NLFSC said that:

> Our schools are now community centers that are used during the day for pupil instruction and evenings and weekends for community agencies and their activities. Essentially these buildings are used 16-18 hours a day for seven days a week and require funding allocations for janitorial/maintenance staff to reflect actual use of the building (97).

The NLTA noted this phenomenon as well:

> Schools in many regions [are] becoming community centers for sports and recreation, computer access, library resources and public meetings. This adds a new demand on the facility and the caretakers. It takes more time to now keep schools in good repair and in a clean condition. With the closing of some schools, the ones remaining open have larger numbers of students and staff placing greater demands on the physical plant (98).

Site-Based Management

Site-based management is now viewed by educational researchers and practitioners as the most effective model for schools and school districts. This model creates additional responsibilities for site-level workers, but results in improved decision-making. Site-based management is only effective, however, if both the district and school administrators are genuinely willing to share leadership and responsibilities with a team of employees.

In successful models, all employees become leaders, and the bureaucratic structures that keep them from making the most effective use of all their skills, experience, energies, and ambitions must be removed.
Employees must be allowed to develop a sense of ownership over the processes for which they are responsible, while at the same time be held accountable for the success of those processes. If necessary supports are not put in place, then site-based management becomes just another example of downloading upon already overworked principals, teachers and support staff.

NAPE recognizes the need to create a team approach to school leadership. They note that:

> ... It takes a complete educational team to educate students of today. The services our members provide are integral to a high-quality public education system...

Further, they recognize that:

> ... Changes resulting from educational reform and a consolidation of schools have resulted in a changing role for the principal as instructional leader, and fewer administrative staff and program specialists at the board level. Larger districts mean less availability of board office personnel, an increase in site-based management and additional responsibilities for the principal (99).

NAPE also contends that additional support from administrative workers (school secretaries) is required if principals are to fulfill their leadership role in a site-based managed environment.

Similarly, NLTA noted that many administrators viewed site-based management as:

> ...the downloading of responsibilities unto the school level (98).

With the creation of larger school boards with fewer resources at the board level, school administrators are expected to do more and more. Site-based management places a greater need for support resources upon school administrators. Yet, with declining enrollments, schools are seeing decreases in allocation of both administrator and secretarial time. Doing more and more with less can only continue for so long. And that point has certainly arrived, according to NAPE.

Where there is a clear convergence of perspectives among educational researchers and practitioners that site-based management, team leadership, and community partnerships are essential to creating and maintaining effective schools, this emerging model of management and leadership will only be effective if employees are provided with adequate resources and time to carry out system expectations.

Technology

The emergence of information and communications technologies (ICT) in the school environment is perhaps the most significant change to be absorbed by the school system in the last decade. Prior to 1990, few schools or school districts were concerned with ICT. In just a decade, ICT has become an integral component of instruction and management routines. School boards have dealt with the resulting infrastructure needs, the required training of support staff

and teachers, and the technical support staff requirements with practically no additional direct funding from Government.

While boards have struggled to provide minimal levels of technology to schools, most schools have partnered with various external groups to develop their ICT infrastructure. As the infrastructure has expanded, however, boards have found it increasingly difficult to provide an acceptable level of technical support and the required training for employees. Even the increase in dust levels resulting from computer fans and the specialized cleaning requirements for the technical equipment have resulted in new challenges for school districts.

2.2 The Changing Grant System

Historically, education was financed locally. Now, for several reasons, education in Canada is seen largely as a provincial responsibility, with increasing demands for more federal funding. Education is currently provided on the basis that it makes a major contribution to the social and economic growth of the provinces and the country as a whole. It is seen as an investment in our people. It is also seen as a right of all citizens, irrespective of where they reside.

There are three challenges that dominate the current literature in educational finance in Canada. One is the need for more funding at all levels. The second is the need for distribution models that provide greater equality of educational opportunity within educational jurisdictions. And, the third is the need to provide greater accountability for expenditures in education, ensuring that the public receives full benefits from the dollars invested in education.

The provinces have accepted their responsibility by creating school districts to operate the schools and by developing grant systems to provide school boards with a measure of funding to fulfil their role. While there are several commonly accepted goals used in distribution models, there are no two grant systems in Canada even remotely alike.
Grant systems are developed to meet provincial needs and responsibilities. Such systems generally include two types of grants: (i) general purpose or block grants, and (ii) special purpose or categorical grants. Each of these types of grants may be further subdivided. They may, for example, be flat, percentage, equalizing or weighted.

Flat grants are set amounts that may be distributed to school boards on a per pupil, per teacher, per school, or per district basis. Percentage grants may be used to provide school boards with a certain percentage of the cost of providing a service. Equalizing grants, on the other hand, attempt to take into consideration the varying costs of providing services locally. Weighted grants also recognize that it costs more to educate some students than others - for example, students in rural areas where the unit cost of education is higher and where transportation is an important issue. This approach argues that we must spend unequally to provide equality of educational opportunity: that equal dollars provided to unlike districts result in unequal units

of service. This principle, though widely accepted, has been difficult to apply in the formulation of grant systems.

The grant system used to finance elementary and secondary education in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of full provincial funding. While there are numerous fees and incidental charges in many schools throughout the Province, the basic costs of education are paid for out of provincial revenues. This system is seen by many to be fairer than the earlier system where local taxation played a role. The burden for funding a good educational system is, therefore, placed strictly and completely upon the Province itself.

One consequence of the full, provincial funding model is that the grant system is highly resistant to change, because of the costs of "leveling up" services in all districts. Significant amounts of money are necessary to make adjustments in school districts. In addition, provincial governments may be slow to adjust funding because they are faced annually with extreme pressure for provincial funds from all provincial services and institutions, including educational.

The Newfoundland and Labrador grant system for school boards, adopted in 1992, has six components. They are as follows:

1. **School Operations**

   - This includes actual costs incurred by school boards for electricity, fuel, telephone, municipal service fees, and snow clearing to school buildings operated by boards.

2. **Administration**

   - This includes the cost of operating board offices. It excludes salaries and benefits for Directors and Assistant Directors (Personnel and Curriculum and Programs), and repairs and maintenance of school board office buildings.

3. **Instructional**

   - This includes all costs associated with instruction, excluding salary costs.

4. **Secretarial**

   - This includes costs related to the salary and benefits of school secretaries:

     - One hour per 10.2 students, multiplied by the average weighted current (local) rate per hour, multiplied by 44 weeks.

- Employee Benefits based on 20 percent of regular allocation.
- Northern Benefits based on actual costs submitted by boards.

5. Janitorial and Maintenance

- This includes costs related to salary and benefits of janitorial and maintenance personnel and for contracted services, less amounts for special incentives:
  - 2.5 hours for 1,000 square feet of total square footage, multiplied by averaged weighted current (local) wage rate per hour, multiplied by 52 weeks.
  - Employee Benefits based on 20 percent of regular allocation.
  - Northern Benefits based on actual costs submitted by boards.

6. Repairs and Maintenance

- This includes cost of repairs and maintenance of the school buildings and school board offices operated by a school board, less amounts for special incentives:
  - A fixed rate of $0.55 per square foot of floor area of school buildings and school board office.

It should be noted that while some components of the system have experienced increases in allocation rates over the years, the rates in Janitorial and Maintenance and Repairs and Maintenance have decreased.
In 1995, the allocation rate for Janitorial and Maintenance was reduced from 2.8 hours per week per 1,000 square feet to 2.6. That rate was further reduced to the current rate of 2.5 hours per week in 1998.

In 1997, the rate for Repairs and Maintenance was reduced from $0.75 per square foot to the current $0.55. The Employee Benefits rate, for both the Secretarial and Janitorial/Maintenance components, was set at twenty percent (20%). No specific provision was made in the funding formula for employee severance funding or the funding of employee contract leaves. Boards are, therefore, required to hold back a portion of the allocation for support staffing to fund severance and leave replacements.

Tables 2-1 to 2-3 provide data concerning the operational grants to school boards for the period 1998-99 to 2002-03. The amounts allocated for secretarial support increased from $5.9 million in 1998-99 to $7.6 million in 2002-03. This represented an increase of 29 percent. Over the same period, enrolments decreased by 13.5 percent (Table 2-4).

The amounts allocated for janitorial and maintenance support staff increased from $21.4 million to $23.7 million, an increase of nearly 11 percent. As shown in Table 2-5, total square footage over the period decreased by approximately 6 percent. Allocations to individual school boards for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance support staff are contained in Tables 2-2 and 2-3. Table 2-1 shows that allocations for repairs and maintenance, another component of the grant system, declined from $6.5 million in 1998-99 to $6.1 million in 2002-03, a decline of 5.8 percent.

Table 2-1

OPERATIONAL GRANTS BY MAJOR COMPONENT 1998-99 to 2002-03

Component	School Year 1998-99	School Year 1999-00	School Year 2000-01	School Year 2001-02	School Year 2002-03
	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)
Janitorial and Maintenance	21,372.8	20,917.1	22,111.6	22,861.8	23,696.8
Secretarial	5,922.0	6,347.0	6,829.8	7,210.1	7,627.4
Repairs and Maintenance	6,460.8	6,271.1	6,209.2	6,132.6	6,086.0
Total	33,755.6	33,535.2	35,150.6	36,204.5	37,410.2

Notes:
1. Information based on Original Allocation with any adjustments for Special Incentives.
2. Additional dollars were paid to the boards for wage increases, pay equity and guaranteed hours of work.

Table 2-2

SECRETARIAL ALLOCATION BY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1998-99 to 2002-03

District	School Year 1998-99	School Year 1999-00	School Year 2000-01	School Year 2001-02	School Year 2002-03
	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)
Labrador	435.6	444.3	485.1	513.6	545.7
Northern Peninsula/ Labrador South	224.5	244.3	265.9	278.9	286.6
Corner Brook/Deer Lake/St. Barbe	491.0	556.5	594.0	627.3	658.7
Cormack Trail	385.4	426.2	442.1	466.5	488.3
Baie Verte/Central/Connaigre	540.8	588.0	648.1	683.9	721.4
Lewisporte/Gander	529.8	572.8	636.1	671.3	705.5
Burin	288.6	317.3	334.3	352.7	369.4
Vista	282.9	301.3	337.0	355.7	369.9
Avalon West	669.2	709.9	784.1	827.4	876.7
Avalon East	2,053.1	2,164.9	2,283.0	2,409.2	2,582.6
Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	21.1	21.5	20.1	23.6	22.6
Total	5,922.0	6,347.0	6,829.8	7,210.1	7,627.4

Notes:
1. Information based on Original Allocation.
2. Additional dollars were paid to the boards for wage increases, pay equity and guaranteed hours of work.

Table 2-3

JANITORIAL/ MAINTENANCE ALLOCATION BY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1998-99 to 2002-03

District	School Year 1998-99	School Year 1999-00	School Year 2000-01	School Year 2001-02	School Year 2002-03
	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)
Labrador	1,387.1	1,456.5	1,655.2	1,843.9	1,892.5
Northern Peninsula/Labrador South	1,016.7	1,026.1	1,108.8	1,177.1	1,135.0
Corner Brook/Deer Lake/St. Barbe	1,803.5	1,879.8	1,933.3	2,068.9	2,182.7
Cormack Trail	1,755.0	1,785.1	1,827.8	1,791.1	1,881.0
Baie Verte/Central/Connaigre	2,031.6	2,135.5	2,299.8	2,301.8	2,427.1
Lewisporte/Gander	2,102.4	2,129.3	2,265.0	2,392.2	2,508.5
Burin	1,150.7	962.5	1,081.0	1,064.0	1,139.6
Vista	995.1	1,044.8	1,156.7	1,168.5	1,236.4
Avalon West	2,273.6	2,224.0	2,245.3	2,332.0	2,317.5
Avalon East	6,751.8	6,135.0	6,386.6	6,570.2	6,826.9
Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	105.3	138.5	152.1	152.1	149.6
Total	21,372.8	20,917.1	22,111.6	22,861.8	23,696.8

Notes:
1. Information based on Original Allocation with any adjustments for Special Incentives.
2. Additional dollars were paid to the boards for wage increases and pay equity.

Table 2-4

STUDENT ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SHOWING ACTUAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1998-99 to 2002-03

District	School Year 1998-99	School Year 1999-00	School Year 2000-01	School Year 2001-02	School Year 2002-03	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2002-03
Labrador	5,516	5,391	5,273	5,194	4,970	-9.9%
Northern Peninsula/ Labrador South	3,769	3,565	3,399	3,250	3,073	-18.5%
Corner Brook/Deer Lake/St. Barbe	8,610	8,314	7,899	7,629	7,511	-12.8%
Cormack Trail	6,598	6,183	5,856	5,565	5,367	-18.7%
Baie Verte/Central/ Connaigre	9,494	9,064	8,651	8,281	8,007	-15.7%
Lewisporte/Gander	9,248	8,897	8,460	8,068	7,756	-16.1%
Burin	4,913	4,675	4,430	4,060	3,904	-20.5%
Vista	4,868	4,714	4,435	4,225	4,081	-16.2%
Avalon West	11,461	10,966	10,520	10,046	9,571	-16.5%
Avalon East	32,656	31,930	30,988	30,332	29,798	-8.8%
Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	268	258	256	248	230	-14.2%
Total	97,401	93,957	90,167	86,898	84,268	-13.5%

Table 2-5

SQUARE FOOTAGE BY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1998-99 TO 2002-03

District	School Year 1998-99	School Year 1999-00	School Year 2000-01	School Year 2001-02	School Year 2002-03
	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)
Labrador	713,435	731,150	731,150	742,515	745,610
Northern Peninsula/Labrador South	564,236	564,027	571,247	571,009	537,827
Corner Brook/Deer Lake/ St. Barbe	1,061,172	1,055,046	1,049,415	1,049,415	1,043,755
Cormack Trail	969,133	1,000,408	947,122	872,829	872,829
Baie Verte/Central/Connaigre	1,224,200	1,228,132	1,227,760	1,210,984	1,210,984
Lewisporte/Gander	1,175,705	1,170,314	1,174,814	1,174,814	1,190,814
Burin	650,399	549,393	555,589	520,127	520,127
Vista	554,407	560,602	581,187	558,406	567,072
Avalon West	1,247,533	1,244,187	1,176,017	1,159,459	1,103,821
Avalon East	3,524,972	3,215,745	3,193,333	3,212,691	3,199,916
Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre Neuve et du Labrador	61,880	83,050	81,845	77,693	72,470
Total	11,747,072	11,402,054	11,289,479	11,149,942	11,065,225

Note. Square footage does not include special incentive schools.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA: SECRETARIAL STAFFING

The issue that received the most attention in the briefs and hearings was the need for more secretarial services in schools. There were also major criticisms of the allocation formula now being used to distribute funds to school boards for this purpose.

3.1 The Importance of the Secretary

Secretaries are multi-talented individuals who serve many different clients and who play a central and vital role in the operation of the school and the achievement of its goals. Their roles go much beyond what many job descriptions prescribe. Traditionally, secretaries performed clerical duties, maintained records, handled school fees, secured and distributed materials, and provided support for teachers. But, now, they do much more. Not only are they clerks and typists, but they are receptionists, accountants, organizers, and, at times, nurses and even mothers. They are at the heart of the school and central to its operation. As one principal said:

> When things seem to be coming apart at the seams, the secretary is the glue that holds it together (33).

One area where the role of the secretary has taken on a new dimension is in receiving, transmitting and disseminating information, with more telephone calls, more correspondence, more personal visits to the school, and more faxes and e-mails. Indeed, the amount and variety of information handled by most secretaries is staggering. Secretaries communicate daily with students, teachers, administrators, school district personnel, parents and the public at large and the demand always is for an immediate response. As one principal stated:

> She is the lifeblood of our school; it is she to whom everyone comes for information – students with all kinds of questions, parents who phone the school, teachers checking records and visitors to the school who sign in at the office. I can go sit quietly in my office and close the door when I need to work. She never can. She has to constantly be juggling 50 things at a time while maintaining a level of extreme decorum. Human relations are paramount in her position (36).

Human relations are, indeed, paramount in his or her position. The school is a cultural setting rather than a business organization. It was suggested at one of our hearings that the importance of technical and clerical skills has become secondary to the importance of human relations with clients of the school, including children. It was argued that the ability to relate to and communicate with adults and an interest in and affection for children were among the most important characteristics of a good secretary today.

The role of secretary today has also extended well beyond handling small amounts of money from fees and fundraisers. Large amounts of money are being collected, through book sales, graduation fees, student travel, and the operation of food services. The amount has been said to exceed $250,000, equal to that of a small or mid-sized business. This requires the latest in accounting and auditing standards. The following three quotations illustrate this challenge:

> The accounting alone is a job in itself. All money coming into the school goes to the school secretary. Can you imagine the receipts we write in the run of a day? All of the books sold, every fee collected, ordering calculators, money raised by hockey, cheerleaders, boys and girls softball, volleyball, prom and safe prom, etc. All money collected has a bill. We have to do up purchase orders for all these bills and write checks to pay them. A bank deposit has to be done up and taken to the bank when necessary (24).

> A very large task at any of our schools is the finances. With thousands and thousands of dollars going through our schools each year, it is becoming even more taxing. Fundraising seems to have become a necessity and a rule rather than the exception! We are responsible for the tracking of the in-school budget as well as board office allocated funds. With diversified groups needing up-to-date accounting of their individual budgets this can be very demanding on the secretary's time (65).

> Our schools through the school fee process and through other financial transactions have become a business of some magnitude. Many of our schools are handling accounts in excess of $250,000. To handle that kind of finances and for a principal to lead a staff of 20 or 25 professionals without the services of adequate secretarial assistance is poor business practice at best and absolute folly at worst (101).

One other theme that emerged during our hearings was that secretaries are often engaged simultaneously in a multiplicity of tasks. While official job descriptions highlight the secretary's responsibility to the school principal, in reality secretaries are responsible to many others as well.

This situation creates demands on their time and emotional resources that are far in excess of those generally placed on secretaries in the business setting or other public institutions. The overlapping of demands, and the impact in terms of workload and stress from things which happen simultaneously, are demonstrated in the following statements:

> Believe it or not there have been times when I have left my office at the end of the day exhausted but with very few of my daily goals achieved, not because of coffee breaks or because I ran personal errands, but simply because of the unscheduled interruptions that occur within a school during any given day. By unscheduled interruptions I am referring to the paper jams in the copier, the frequent instances where I have to supervise a child while waiting for a parent to pick him or her up to go home after calling home sick, the numerous times that I choose to clean and Band-Aid a child's cut after coming from the playground, running to get ice packs for a child who has been hit or has a headache. Sometimes it seems as though ice packs and Band-Aids have become the tools of my trade and this is in no way meant as a complaint, but is simply stated as fact (43).

> School secretaries wear many hats daily. Frequently we feel as if we are on fast forward with a malfunctioning pause button and a misplaced stop button. Our days are often spent on autopilot, completing numerous demanding tasks that have become interruptions woven intermittently between our major responsibilities. For most, coffee breaks are almost unheard of and we get an actual full lunch break – if we are lucky and discipline ourselves (Ssshhhhh – don't tell the Union!) (65).

> The multi-tasking nature of the secretarial position creates a stressful and hectic work environment. The secretary is constantly receiving demands from parents, students, teachers, and myself, while responding to the many other demands associated with the position; as an accountant with responsibility for the management and record keeping of a significant amount of money coming in and going out; as manager of a huge data base and with responsibilities (to) set up and maintain a number of organizational systems which are critical to the orderly functioning of the school (94).

3.2 The Secretary and the Principal

As noted in Chapter 2, changes in the nature and complexity of education have impacted significantly on the role of the secretary. One such change has been the move towards site-based management. This has increased clerical work in the areas of school budgeting, requisitions, staffing and personnel, professional development and evaluation, and school maintenance, thereby creating special challenges for administrators and secretaries (92).

Reports from principals and secretaries were consistent concerning the importance of providing sufficient secretarial help so that principals could perform the instructional leadership now being demanded of them through the Schools Act, 1997. Principals required to devote their time and energy to secretarial and administrative tasks are unable to offer the professional leadership demanded at the school level, assisting teachers, developing new programs, and responding to the educational needs of students and parents. In small schools, principals now face an impossible task.

A sample of the comments from the briefs and hearings are presented below to reflect the crucial importance of this matter:

> I find myself, most of the time, preparing memos and making sure they are copied and sent out to students and parents; counting money and doing bank deposits, as well as accounting for school funds and Instructional Grants, calling substitutes, greeting visitors, delivering messages to students, teachers and other personnel, sorting mail and faxes, downloading e-mail messages, typing correspondence and other clerical jobs. These jobs are essential in keeping a school functioning, but it reduces the Principal's role to that of a manager and not a leader, as current thinking would consider the Principal to be (9).

> In the past few years the role of school administrator has changed substantially. School principals are expected to be transformational leaders in their schools – building school culture and focusing on teaching and learning. This role has been recognized in the professional development initiatives of Boards and of the Department of Education. Government has also recognized it by pay increases for school administrators. Fulfilling this role requires the support of professional secretaries. We have only created a sad paradox (and a financial waste) if we pay administrators more to perform the duties of a trained secretary (13).

> We submit that administrators are the highest paid secretaries in the province when Section 24 of the Schools Act states that administrators are expected to be instructional leaders. Without additional support, administrators – and thus schools and students – cannot achieve the results that are expected (29).

No matter how small the school, principals are expected to be curriculum leaders; planning programs, setting direction, implementing policy and doing the myriad of activities required for a school to run effectively and efficiently. In the absence of support services, the list becomes much larger and the

expertise of the professional educator is inefficiently consumed doing that which could easily be done by someone with a different skill set … a secretary (98).

> The changing roles and demands placed upon our school principals, who are looked upon as transformational leaders in our schools and are charged with building a learning school culture, have required that principals be more actively involved in the leadership component. Having principals (or vice-principals for that matter) use their valuable time and expertise to perform roles better handled by a trained secretary is undesirable from a professional and cost- effective perspective (101).

3.3 Funding and the Funding Formula

While during our hearings there was widespread acknowledgment of the importance of the secretary, all presenters argued that the system had failed to reward them appropriately: that they were expected to carry an unrealistic workload and possess very specialized and sophisticated skills, without appropriate official status or remuneration. The low hours of work and low annual income were not considered commensurate with the work they performed, the responsibilities they assumed, or the importance that they had acquired over the years. Several briefs summarized the strong views of employees themselves:

> We must be the only people on the face of the earth who yearly (because of workload) go to work before we are hired and continue to work after we are laid off and still have our employer threatening to cut our hours! (65).

> Support workers have families and many are trying to make ends meet with full time hours and the present pay rates. It is an added stress when each year you have to wait for a letter from your employer letting you know whether your hours have been reduced, regardless of the number of years of service you have with the Board. The lack of job security creates a great deal of stress and certainly impacts on morale and self-esteem. Support staff feel that there is more work expected for less time and less pay (4).

> It is somewhat pointless tc have a raise in pay negotiated at the bargaining table and then have School Boards reduce hours (4).

> CUPE workers are facing ongoing attacks on their health, safety and well-being as governments move ahead to or have already implemented cutbacks, mergers, amalgamations, downsizing and restructuring of the

> education system under the guise of delivering more efficient educational services. In almost all cases, the consequence of this is an increase of workload and a corresponding rise in injuries, stress, burnout, absenteeism and, yes, suicide (12).
>
> With the implementation of Education Reform, our schools have experienced major changes – some more noticeable than others. We have heard over and over concern expressed from various groups re the impact the Referendum has had on students and teachers; but somehow in the turmoil we, the school's support staff, seem to have been once again forgotten (65).
>
> When the provincial government experienced the tremendous lay-off of its workforce years ago, it was done from a full-time perspective. Workers were taken out of the system and indeed severe workloads were left for existing employees. During that exercise there was no evidence of employees having their daily hours of work reduced or cut in half. This mentality seems to be solely confined to school boards. This approach is demeaning to school board workers who sometimes must feel like they are treated as department store or production line workers (69).
>
> There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the support staff have taken the biggest beating in this time of education reform, downsizing and funding reductions (85).

Another theme emerging from the briefs and hearings is that the present formula based on enrollment is totally inappropriate. It was argued that there are basic functions and duties performed by the secretaries, unrelated to school size. The need for secretarial support services must, therefore, be tied primarily to functional requirements rather than the number of students in school. Among other things, this would mean a basic level of secretarial support in all schools, irrespective of size. The following quotations provide a sample of criticisms of the formula and an indication of the very strong view that the amount of support available in small schools, in particular, is grossly inadequate:

> I have been teaching in a small rural school for the past fifteen years and have been faced with many challenging moments but the one that continues to plague me the most is the lack of staff support small schools are able to obtain. In order for our school to run more efficiently it must be supplied with enough secretary hours to do its job (62).

> It would be unfathomable for any other government office to be open without the requisite secretarial services during hours of operation. However, in our system we expect small schools to operate in such a fashion. This is especially relevant for principals in such schools, ones in which they are teaching most of the day. For example, in a school with 100 students or less the principal has very little time for administrative duties, and the total time for the secretary is no more than 2 hours per day (66).
>
> In recent years, the number of hours allocated has been reduced on the basis of declining enrollments. While the numbers of students may have declined, the duties for which secretaries are responsible are ever increasing. With increased accountability, greater formalization of school business, increased devolution of responsibility to schools and a greater public demand on the services of schools, secretaries are now overburdened by the myriad of responsibilities they must engage within a minimum of time. No longer is the job of secretary as simplistic as answering the phone, filing and keeping canteen accounts. Secretaries must now be highly trained, proficient and professional individuals who can manage the multitude of tasks coming their way on a daily basis (83).
>
> The government's method of determining secretarial time based on enrollment is ineffective. By using student enrollment as the basis, it delivers a double hit to schools when enrolment declines because it also affects the administrative time allotted to schools. A decline means that principals and vice-principals, who are expected to pick up the extra work that secretaries cannot complete because of already reduced hours, will also be docked valuable administrative time (88).

In order to determine the kind of duties that secretaries perform in even the smallest schools, the Study Group initiated an analysis of a selection of job descriptions.

These job descriptions were characterized by their variety. They varied in format, content and complexity. Some were merely a list of tasks with no elaboration, while others contained introductory statements and more detailed elaborations of important responsibilities and relationships.

The analysis confirmed that there are a core of duties that must be performed in all schools, irrespective of enrolment. These include receptionist duties, financial accounting, word processing, handling both letters and electronic mail, developing filing systems, photocopying, assisting with fund raising, completing requests for information, handling textbooks, ordering

and tracking school supplies, and providing first aid for students. If secretaries are not available to perform these duties, they become the responsibilities of the principal and teachers, many of whom lack the professional skills to adequately and efficiently perform them. This analysis of job descriptions was consistent with the views of many of the presenters at the hearings.

There was unanimity at the hearings concerning the need for the grant system to provide school boards with sufficient funds to pay secretaries severance and the cost of leaves resulting from collective agreements. Not replacing secretaries until the third day when they are on sick leave, for example, was criticized by all, including school boards. The following quotations reflect these views:

> All employee benefits are not funded. Negotiated leave and severance pay are significant costs which the board must accept but for which it receives no funding. An aging workforce will require the board to allocate greater resources to meet these needs (70).

> We find it ironic and somewhat hypocritical that the provincial government felt the need to pass legislation designating educational support workers as essential employees in the event of a labour dispute, but yet this essential employee designation does not apply when it comes to replacing those workers when they are on sick leave (99).

> Issues such as replacement for sick leave and other paid leaves, full mandatory payroll-related costs are not adequately funded. This makes the utilization of an adequate allocation of secretaries to schools more difficult (102).

The need to extend the year for secretaries also received a great deal of support. Many argued for an additional week before school opens and a week after it closes. The following reflects this view:

> Organizing all the duties is an overwhelming task. All secretaries should report to work one week before school opens to organize the sale of text books, schedules, timetables for teachers, opening of supplies, summer mail, etc. Also, they should remain for one week after school finishes to complete the final year end tasks, such as accounting, ordering supplies and books for next year, transferring data to the Department of Education, filing, deposits, etc. If secretaries could work these additional hours before and after the school year it would alleviate much stress associated with those busy times. It seems that a secretary is always trying to catch up because the hours allowed for that school is insufficient (22).

3.4 The Issue of Management Rights

This issue was one of the contentious issues in the NAPE strike of 2001. The Young Mediation Report had this to say:

> In examining the outstanding issues, persuasive arguments were put forward from a management perspective, against guaranteeing "hours of work" into the future. Any kind of guaranteed hours severely reduced management's abilities to turn school boards into more efficient and fiscally sound organizations. On the other side, support workers argued they have become an easy target for cost reductions. In many instances, such reductions have been driven by the apparent ease with which management has been able to reduce "hours of work" as a key tool in solving their several fiscal restraints. Hence, the appeal from Support Workers, in the form of a strike, that the reduction in hours must come to an end.

This issue soon appeared in the briefs and during the hearings for this study. School board after school board recommended that their right to manage the school system and assign/reassign resources should not be compromised. Two quotations expanded on the concept as follows:

> Guaranteed hours of work should not be part of a funding formula. The differences that exist between schools in different parts of the province and with different uses and enrollments make guaranteed hours of work prohibitive to the operations of the school boards (102).

> A school district is a dynamic organization always seeking to be responsive to innovative and responsive to change in the delivery of educational and related services to students.

> Targeted funding allocations, fixed into the regular operating funding system, relating only to specific elements of service delivery will, in effect, micro-manage and restrict the school district's ability to address its full range of responsibilities (101).

Many boards pointed out that the uniqueness of schools and their special needs did not permit the allocation of human resources to schools on the basis of a simple formula. Additionally, making local management decisions is part of the legislated authority provided to school boards.

On the other hand, a NAPE Local had this to say:

> I would ask that there be some formula devised that must be used by all school boards as allocated. They should not have the power to change these allocations to suit themselves. There are many variables which should be used in determining this formula such as high schools versus elementary schools, school size, age of students in the schools, age of the school building. I trust this Committee will take all these things into consideration and arrive at a fair and just conclusion (23).

NAPE itself expressed its position as follows:

> The Department of Education must provide school boards with designated funding for administrative services and designated funding for maintenance and cleaning services. School boards must be held accountable for spending this money on the provision and public delivery of those services that the funding was designated for (99).

In the case of CUPE, the Union acknowledges the right of the employer to distribute support services to schools. The Union argues, however, that no changes should be made in the distribution program without full consultation for the need for such changes with the Union. The Union also argues that minimum standards must be established. In the case of one CUPE board, the Union had negotiated both secretarial and janitorial/maintenance positions with minimum hours of work in its contract.

The Study Group heard a great deal about the failure of school boards to allocate at least the amounts it received for secretarial support for this purpose. Secretaries and principals argued that funds were being "siphoned" from the amounts allocated to the boards for this service, to be expended elsewhere. Many were surprised, therefore, to hear that most boards were "subsidizing" the amounts allocated. The following quotations speak to this issue:

> Since School District 3 came into existence there has been increased demand from school administrators for secretarial time. The demand was so great that in order to address the concern, in 2001-02 our District subsidized government secretarial grants by $110,000. This resulted in the Board spending approximately18% more than what was allocated by government. Even with this additional money we were still not meeting the secretarial needs of our schools. This year, under severe restraints and with a more than determined effort to meet our budget, we will still subsidize the secretarial grant by more than $71,000 (11%) (13).

> In terms of funding Hours of Work, this particular component has been the most challenging for the Lewisporte/Gander School District. In order to provide for what the Board considers to be a basic level of service, our district has been subsidizing this particular component by an average annual amount of $150,000. Even with our declining enrollments, schools still require a basic level of service that should be provided (64).
>
> Currently each school has a minimum of 25 hours per week of secretarial support.
>
> - Although a minimum level of secretarial support for the instructional day is currently in place, our school district can not afford to subsidize this through other components of the operation grant.
>
> - In the current year, these hours will cost in excess of $80K over the existing secretarial allocation (72).

The perception that school boards were using funds from the secretarial category to finance other services led to claims that secretaries were perceived by boards and the Government as second-class citizens; that school boards were dealing with budgetary cutbacks and fiscal restraint by cutting secretarial hours; and that other school board services were being funded "on the backs" of secretaries because of their lack of status and power as employees.

Several presentations suggested that, when compared to other organizations and agencies, school secretaries were not treated fairly in the allocation of secretarial resources. The following quotations reflect this view:

> When we were on strike we were watching the secretaries go to work at the Community College next door to the school. They have probably 150 students, maximum. They have a full time receptionist, store person, person for scheduling and one for accounting all year around. I have 235 students and do similar work as these three or four secretaries in 7 hours a day, 10 months per year, and every year since we went under Cormack Trail I have to worry about getting my hours cut (24).
>
> We are a school with 530 students and a staff of 45 individuals. Our secretarial hours amount to 10 per day. When I compare this to other institutions, this number seems ridiculous. When I visit HRDC offices or provincial government departments or even private corporate business, you will always find a receptionist and several individuals to handle

clerical work. Ten hours secretarial time is just not enough to service the varying needs of a building housing close to 600 people. (71).

We ask the panel to do a comparison between school and other government offices. When you do that comparison on the allocation of the office support staff, please include secretaries, file clerks, mail clerks, accountant clerks, etc., in the ratio (79).

3.5 The Issue of Technical Support

Throughout its deliberations, the Study Group heard a great deal about the need for more technicians in the schools. While the Department of Education has promoted greater use of technology in education, there is no specific funding to provide the human resources to implement this policy. In some schools, teachers are designated as network administrators, resulting in less time for in-class activities or an increased workload for the teachers involved. This was considered unacceptable.

Even more unacceptable, particularly to support staff workers, was the practice of funding technical personnel from those components of the grant system where school boards have discretion, including the funding being allocated for secretarial services, janitorial and maintenance, repairs and maintenance, and instructional materials. These areas are under-funded, and taking funds from these to provide technical support exacerbated those needs. The number of positions being so provided merely scratches the surface, with schools having literally hundreds of computers.

The following quotations reflect the current concerns:

Technical Support: At the present time, government does not provide any funding whatsoever that is directed toward this need. In the case of our Board, this cost is taken from funds intended for the classroom. Accordingly, we are able to fund one full-time position only at some cost of $43,000. Also, attached to this unit is a travel budget of some $15,000 annually. This one position is not more than addressing half the needs of the district (8).

We have over 100 computers networked and we receive ½ day of tech support every 21 days. We end up paying a teacher to do tech support. Much of our administrative time goes to tech support. A computer teacher, with his Masters, receives around $60,000/annum. That is an expensive technician (31)!

The NLTA summarized the need for technical support in the following statement:

> With the increased reliance on computers and other electronic devices, there is a constant need for someone to service the demands of trouble shooting and keeping things on-line. In many schools a teacher is designated as network administrator and if time is allotted to that person to carry out the function, it decreases the amount of in-class time that school has for student contacts. If no time is assigned, the workload of the assigned teacher is increased. This is unacceptable (98).

The fact that the Williams-Sparkes Report recommended the establishment of a grant for technical support as part of Recommendation 52 added to the significance of this issue. Recommendation 52 was the one referenced by the Young Mediation Report and the resulting MOU between the Premier and the President of NAPE establishing the Study Group. The Study Group felt obligated, therefore, to make a general recommendation in this area.

The Study Group conducted a very preliminary examination of industry standards in the area of technical support for computer and network servicing. Implementation of even the minimum set of standards would cost millions of dollars. We decided, therefore, to offer an interim solution until Department of Education specialists in this area have time to consider a longer-range solution.

The Study Group wishes to recognize the importance of and tremendous growth in the use of information technology in our school system. Data on the number of computers now being used to deliver programs are impressive.

The growth of Distance Education is equally impressive; thus, the urgent need for a significant investment in this area, commencing with the proposal made in this Report.

3.6 Funding Models

Several funding models were proposed in the briefs and hearings for the allocation of funds to boards for secretarial staff. Included in the more detailed ones were those by the Corner Brook-Deer Lake-St. Barbe Board, the Cormack Trail Board, the Burin Peninsula Board, the Avalon West Board and CUPE.

With one exception, the models presented to the Study Group could be described as a service-oriented model, with a tier-system approach. Each assumed that there were basic services that had to be performed, even in the smaller schools. The model was weighted to reflect this reality. At the same time, there were functions that increased with the number of students served.

The Corner Brook-Deer Lake-St. Barbe Board made the following proposal:

Up to 7 Grade Levels		8 or More Grade Levels	
Students	**Hours**	**Students**	**Hours**
1-74	15	1-74	25
75-149	25	75-149	35
150-249	35	150-249	45
250-399	45	250-399	55
400-549	55	400-549	65
550-699	65	550-699	75
700-849	75	700-849	85
850 +	85	850 +	95

Corner Brook-Deer Lake-St. Barbe Funding Model (13)

The Board was asked during the hearings to cost its model for its own District. In a letter dated November 13, 2002, the Director of Education estimated that the proposal would result in an increase of sixty-five percent over its current allocation.

Three other proposals also used the serviced-tiered approach: The Cormack Trail's Board, the Avalon West Board and CUPE.

The elements of each were as follows:

Number of Students	Weekly Secretarial Hours
1 – 50	15 hours
51-200	25 hours
201-350	30 hours
351-500	35 hours
501-700	50 hours

Cormack Trail Board Funding Proposal (20)

Number of Students	Weekly Secretarial Hours
1 - 200	25 hours
201 - 350	30 hours
351 - 500	40 hours
501 - 700	55 hours
701 - 1,000	75 hours

Avalon West School Board Funding Model (76)

Number of Students	Weekly Secretarial Hours
Less than 50	15/wk - 1 secretary
51 - 200	30 hrs/wk - 1 secretary
200 - 500	35 hrs/wk - 1 secretary
500 +	60 hrs/wk - 1 secretary @ 35 hrs per week & 1 secretary @ 25 hrs/wk
900 +	70 hrs/week - 2 secretaries @ 35 hrs/wk

CUPE Funding Model (91)

The model proposed by the Burin Peninsula Board had a different approach. It recommended that the allocation model for secretarial services be linked to the allocation formula for teachers. The teacher model is weighted to reflect the needs of rural schools. The Burin Peninsula Board also argued that use of this approach would result in allocations that would not be as sensitive to declining enrolment as the current model. The model proposed was the following:

Secretarial Allocation Model

Number of Teaching Units	Basic Allocation Hours/ Week	K-7 Additional Hours/Day	K-12 Additional Hours/Day	Senior High Additioonal Hours/Day	Junior High Additional Hours/Day	Full Time Administration Hours/Day	Total Hours/Week			
							K-7	K-12	Senior High	Junior High
1-3	10	½	1	½	½	1	17 ½	20	17 ½	17 ½
4-6	12	½	1	½	½	1	19 ½	22	19 ½	19 ½
7-9	15	½	1	½	½	1	22 ½	25	22 ½	22 ½
10-12	20	½	1	½	½	1	27 ½	31	27 ½	27 ½
13-15	25	½	1	½	½	1	32 ½	35	32 ½	32 ½
16-20	30	½	1	½	½	1	37 ½	40	37 ½	37 ½
21-25	35	1	1	-	-	-	40	40	35	35
26-30	40	1	1	-	-	-	45	45	40	40
31-35	45	1	1	-	-	-	50	50	45	45
36-40	50	1	1	-	-	-	55	55	50	50
41-45	55	1	1	-	-	-	60	60	55	55

Burin Peninsula School Board Funding Proposal (70)

3.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the data collected for this study suggest the following:

1. Secretaries make a very important contribution to the success of our schools.

2. The low hours of work and salaries of secretaries are not commensurate with the work they perform, or with the responsibilities they assume.

3. The need for major increases in the funding for this service has been recognized for some time, in addition to the need for a new grant formula.

4. While many secretaries feel grossly overworked, insecure and undervalued in terms of hours of work, they take great pride in the accomplishments of their schools and great satisfaction at being considered an important part of the educational team.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA: JANITORIAL AND MAINTENANCE STAFFING

Janitorial/maintenance personnel have an important part to play in the development of a productive learning climate. The learning process is either enhanced or hindered by the physical environment where learning occurs. The condition of the school building and grounds helps shape the morale of teachers and the attitudes of pupils. It also sends a message to the community.

4.1 The Importance of Janitorial and Maintenance Staffing

The importance of providing more janitorial and maintenance funding was stressed throughout the briefs and hearings. All stakeholders argued that these support services were necessary to provide students and teachers with a safe, secure and healthy environment – a right in today's society. Because of the shortage of hours of work, light fixtures and shades were not dusted; desks, floors and washrooms were not adequately cleaned; eating spaces were unsanitary; and walkways were not shoveled in the winter. One brief suggested that if unannounced spot checks were done properly by the Department of Health, many of our schools would not get a passing grade.

4.2 Factors Associated with Need

Several factors have been associated with the recent demand for more services in the area of janitorial and maintenance staffing. As discussed in Chapter 2, the public is demanding higher standards of care and security. Many buildings have aged and require more preventive maintenance and cleaning. School grounds are not often well developed. Gravel parking lots present cleaning problems. The provision of lunch programs for students being bused creates multiple challenges, particularly if adequate cafeteria space is not provided. The following quotations represent the views of many presenters:

> Buildings are getting older, with the average age of schools in District 3 at 29 years. The School District has not been able to keep up with maintenance on these buildings and many are in very poor condition. Roofs and windows leak, washroom fixtures and finishes are worn out and many major building systems require replacement. Many parking lots are gravel and this gravel ends up in schools (13).

> The cafeteria would be cleaned in the morning (it is used as a holding area for students when arriving to school), after recess, and lunch hour and again at the end of the day (it is used as a waiting area for students waiting for a bus).

> We also have a "Breakfast Program" in the mornings and this is held in a separate room that would require cleaning. This same room is used for lunch-hour and would require a second cleaning at this time. Meanwhile, this person could be paged any number of times during the day for bathroom problems. Children seem to love plugging up toilets and wash basins (23).
>
> Preventive maintenance and extensive cleaning of school buildings is now a thing of the past (69).

The factor most often cited as requiring more janitorial and maintenance service was community use of schools. While few briefs rejected the concept of schools as community centers, all indicated that such use had major implications for janitorial and maintenance services. Some fees were applied by schools to cover the extra costs for certain types of use, but these charges were often considered inadequate. Many community uses were judged to be school-related.

The challenges associated with community use were expressed as follows:

> Most of our schools in those small towns are used for the town centers. A lot of user groups are using our schools after hours and on weekends for their community events. This makes it much harder for our caretakers to maintain the school and keep it clean. This is what we call increasing workloads, which means too many duties and responsibilities with very few hours in the day to complete them (16).
>
> With the introduction of In-School Public Libraries, Family Resource Centers, Breakfast Programs, etc., the traffic and janitorial demands in many of our schools is at an all-time high. With our school gyms being the town's only recreational facility it means they are in use morning, noon and night. How does one schedule around that and still provide adequate clean up time (65)?
>
> Schools on the Burin Peninsula, and indeed elsewhere in the Province, are heavily utilized by school and community groups. It is not unusual to see school buildings operational for five (5) or seven (7) nights per week. Along with school sporting groups, Scouts, Brownies, PTA groups, etc., many outside agencies rent the school buildings for other sporting events or meetings. The clean up of this work is left for our staff to deal with, without any consideration for additional time or remuneration.

> This situation is, of course, compounded in winter months where the snow, ice and dirt are tracked through the schools (69).
>
> Many of our schools are open to functions well into the evening, with school extra-curricular activities and community rentals. However, usually our rentals are "no charge" rentals for our community children's groups, whether it is church groups, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts or other children's groups. We fully support the use of our schools by the public, but it does add additional work to the cleaning/maintenance of the building (79).
>
> Our schools are now community centers that are used during the day for pupil instruction and evening and weekends for community agencies and their activities. Essentially these buildings are used 16-18 hours a day for seven days a week and require funding allocations for janitorial/maintenance staff to reflect the actual use of the building (97).

Two submissions urged school boards to maintain attractive school grounds during the summer to help beautify communities interested in participating in the Tidy Towns Program. These were as follows:

> Janitors/Maintenance: Our main concern here is in the summer months. Our town has recently been involved extensively in a Tidy Towns competition. About five years we developed a beautiful playground that we were able to keep up, often with help of HRDC funding. The last two years this was restricted by a Union grievance by laid off maintenance personnel. The end result is an awful eyesore right in the middle of town and a playground not fit for the use of our students (71).
>
> Our schools and District are under increasing demands to have our buildings and grounds maintained throughout the summer months. Communities are taking great pride in campaigns, such as "Tidy Towns" and "Cleaner & Greener". Our towns, in conjunction with our Province, are moving forward to capture the tourism dollars. Towns/Municipalities expect the schools' properties to be maintained and groomed. Our school buildings are some of the largest and most attractive buildings in our communities. Caring for the schools and the school property throughout the summer months instills a sense of civic pride not only in our adult citizens but also the students (79).

The Study Group was consistently reminded of the discrepancy between the sanitary conditions of schools and those of government buildings generally.

The strong feeling was that government buildings were much more sanitary and better maintained, largely because they had more staff and better equipment and supplies. The following statement reflects this view:

> Many school staff and parents are of the opinion that students and school staff, are second class citizens that can easily be accommodated in buildings that are unsafe and unhealthy while other public buildings are cleaned and maintained to a much higher standard. Visit your local school and compare it to the vast majority of public buildings. There is obviously a lower standard for most primary/secondary schools (29).

Several other themes emerged during the deliberations of the Study Group. One was the importance of having co-operatively developed and well-understood job descriptions for support staff. Routine work schedules and well-understood expectations are importance to the maintenance of the school plant. Time-lines and systematic planning for the completion of major maintenance and repair projects need to be supplemented with daily and weekly schedules to ensure that routine janitorial and maintenance tasks get done.

Included in job descriptions should be the following:

- specific tasks to be performed
- responsibilities for daily or routine inspections
- responsibilities for conducting preventive maintenance
- responsibilities for notifying school principals regarding hazards
- compliance with regulatory requirements
- maintenance of inventory
- handling emergencies

As part of its research, the Study Group did an analysis of a sample of job descriptions for janitorial/maintenance personnel. As expected, these workers perform a multitude of duties. Mentioned most often on the descriptions analyzed were the proper cleaning of floors and desks; setting up, taking down, and cleaning facilities used for lunch purposes; emptying and cleaning garbage receptacles; snow and ice removal; cleaning bathrooms and shower rooms; cleaning and filling soap, towel and toilet paper dispensers; checking lighting, fire escapes, and entrances; and dusting to enhance air quality.

Throughout our hearings, it was also emphasized that janitors/maintenance personnel have to be provided with the right kind of cleaning supplies and equipment to do the job. Skimping on

cleaning supplies, for example, can lead to low morale among janitors, not to mention a dirty building. Vendors can help with the selection of supplies and equipment, as well as with training for their use.

The importance of in-service education was also stressed. Janitors and other support staff need in-service education. Janitors need to be trained in the proper use of cleaning supplies and emergency procedures. Their responsibilities have been expanded with new health and safety provisions and energy management systems, thereby requiring additional preparation. Even the most skilled need to be continually updated. As well, janitors should be fully involved in the development of in-service programs and other kinds of staff development. Such involvement enhances their position, makes them feel a part of the educational team, and ensures that training and staff developments are suited to individual and organizational needs. Administration by edict works no better with support staff than it does with other professionals.

Finally, during the hearings, it became apparent that many janitors as well as secretaries develop very close working relationships with teachers and students. In their selection, evaluation and training, therefore, their ability to work well with adults and their attitudes towards and understanding of children should be major considerations.

4.3 Funding and The Funding Formula

The shortage of funding to provide adequate services in the area of janitorial and maintenance resulted from several factors. One was the under-funding of this component itself. Repeatedly, the Study Group was reminded that over the past decade the formula for allocating such funds to school boards was reduced from 2.8 hours per 1000 square feet to 2.6 hours, then to the current 2.5 hours. In a period of increasing demands, school boards were expected to do more with less.

Then, there were the pressures to fund new services not provided for in the grant structure. Technicians, for example, had to be hired to keep the rapidly expanding computer system operating without additional funding from government. Boards found it necessary to "scrounge" from all possible discretionary sources to fund such services. This led to claims that even the small amount allocated for janitorial and maintenance staffing was not being used for that purpose.

The shortage of funds not only resulted in low levels of janitorial and maintenance staffing, but also Christmas, Easter, and summer layoffs by some school boards to conserve funds. This practice was severely criticized, as illustrated in the following statement:

> Many of our janitorial staff in our schools are 10-month employees. These workers are not only laid off during the summer months, but also during Christmas and Easter.
>
> Unfortunately, it is during these school down times that much of the heavy workload such as stripping/waxing of the floors is completed. This results in the work being carried out while the employees are short staffed. During the summer recess not only are the schools short-changed because of the lay-off of the 10-month employees but also due to the 12-month employees on vacation. As the years go by, many of our workers have increased annual leave time. There is no replacement for these workers while they are on vacation. Subsequently, the nightmare of the shortage of workers to do the mountain of work that is expected during the summer recess escalates. When school ends in June, some of our janitors are laid off just a few days after, leaving our schools with no janitorial service during the summer and one can only imagine the state that some of the schools are left in. After all, there is little that can be done to clean up after the students until they are dismissed for the summer. Unfortunately, many of our janitors are dismissed as well (65).

One full-time janitor made a significant impression on the Study Group when he presented data to show that with wage increases and time cuts over the past ten years, his dollar earnings are less now than they were ten years ago.

School boards were not happy with the position they found themselves in, having to cut back on services, laying off employees at certain times of the year, or having policies that did not allow daily replacement or easy access to various contract leaves. They agreed that these things were required because of the under-funding of the entire system.

4.4 The Issue of Management Rights

The whole issue of management rights was raised again in connection with any restructuring of this component of the grant system. The arguments used in this regard were basically the same as those used in the discussion of the secretarial component.

School boards expressed the view that with any grant system they had to retain the right to manage their resources in the best interest of the whole system, within the limits of collective agreements.

Retaining this right was particularly important in a period of declining enrolments and fiscal restraint. School boards have few discretionary funds and they argue that in the allocation of resources to individual schools, they have to maintain the right to manage the distribution of such funds.

Employees on the other hand wanted some assurance that they would not continue to be easy targets for cost reductions in periods of fiscal restraint. They argued that "hours of work" were being reduced or held constant as a means of deficit control.

Even after salary increases had been negotiated, some employees received little or no additional income because of a reduction of hours. Layoffs during the Christmas or Easter vacation or during the summer to address budgetary needs were considered particularly unjust.

As noted earlier, employees and their representatives felt strongly that school boards should expend at least the amounts allocated to them through the grant system for janitorial/maintenance staffing for this purpose. There were even suggestions that the allocation of staffing to individual schools should be in accordance with the formula used to allocate funds to boards.

Throughout the hearings, school boards responded by suggesting that the grant system was not a staff allocation formula, that a portion of the grant had to be held back to cover employee benefits and leaves, and that funds had to be found somewhere in the system for emerging needs such as technical support for information technology equipment and programming.

There were suggestions that the issue of "hours of work" for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel could best be addressed at the bargaining table. CUPE had done that in its negotiations with the Avalon East School Board. But school boards argued that such negotiations were doomed to failure with the current grant system. While the configuration of schools made a negotiated settlement possible for Avalon East, rural realities together with inadequate funding prevented such a settlement in other boards.

4.5 Funding Models

Several funding models were proposed for janitorial and maintenance staffing. A rather simple funding model was presented by the Cormack Trail School Board. After stating several principles, the Board proposed that the rates be increased from 2.5 per 1000 square feet to 3.0 per square foot (20).

Another such model was the one proposed by the Avalon West School Board (76). That model contained the following five elements:

1. All schools should have janitorial and maintenance support as two separate functions with appropriately trained and qualified personnel.

2. Janitorial support should be funded on industry standards as established on a provincial basis and must be comparable to the standard across the country.

3. Funding should reflect the actual cost of providing this support, including leave replacement and benefits.

4. Substitute janitorial and maintenance employees should be provided for on a daily basis (i.e., 100% replacement provided including a specified number of days for in-service/training).

5. The funding allocation should be based upon a 52-week work year for all janitorial and a reasonable number of maintenance employees. This would allow for on-going maintenance and cleaning throughout the year and provide for a major maintenance overhaul during the summer season (3.0 to 3.5 hours per week per 1000 square feet would be a more realistic factor).

The CUPE model (100) contained the following provisions:

1. The allocation of hours of work for school cleaning and maintenance staff would continue to be based on the square footage of the area required to be maintained.

2. The hours of work per week allocated by the Department of Education to schools be increased to 3.5 hours per 1000 square feet of total square footage, multiplied by the current local wage rate per hour, multiplied by 52 weeks.

3. Schools of a size of 20,000 square feet or greater to be guaranteed:

   - A 40 hour per week, 52 week per year Maintenance Custodian/ Maintenance Repairer

   - A 40-hour per week, 52 week per year Custodian/Caretaker

4. Schools of a size of 10,000 square feet or greater to be guaranteed:

   - A 40-hour week, 52 weeks per year Maintenance Custodian/Maintenance Repairer, who would assume all maintenance and cleaning duties

5. Schools of a size less than 10,000 square feet to be guaranteed:

- A minimum of twenty-five (25) hours per week, 52 weeks per year Maintenance Custodian/Maintenance Repairer who would also assume all maintenance and cleaning duties

6. The Board would be guaranteed an additional sum of money for sick leave replacement based on 80% of previous year's usage.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this Chapter may be summarized as follows:

1. Janitorial and maintenance personnel make a very valuable contribution to the educational process.

2. The level of funding provided to school boards in Newfoundland and Labrador for this purpose is inadequate to provide the support staff needed in today's schools.

3. While they may sometimes feel very negative about their workload and their failure to be treated as full-time employees, with all of the associated benefits, many janitors and maintenance personnel are very proud of their work and are highly respected as members of the total staff of the school.

4. The lack of effective preventive maintenance programs makes the job of janitors and maintenance personnel much more challenging.

5. Community use is a major factor to be considered by school boards in the allocation of employees to schools.

6. Increased training is necessary in the proper use of new cleaning supplies, cleaning equipment, and the use of technology in schools, such as that associated with energy management systems.

7. The unit of square footage is acceptable to most stakeholders as a general basis for allocation of funding to school boards.

8. The present allocation to school boards in Newfoundland land Labrador does not cover the cost of severance and leaves associated with collective agreements.

9. The views of employers differed significantly from those of many employees concerning the need for targeted funding in this area.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The issue of support staff in education is a serious one. Members of the Study Group concluded that secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel have been expected to carry an unrealistic workload without appropriate recognition and remuneration. They have been largely forgotten during the process of educational reform. While demands for their services have increased, allocations for secretarial staffing, for example, have declined with declining enrolments. In fact, there are many secretarial duties which are not tied to enrolments at all. Ten years ago, allocation rates for janitorial and maintenance staffing and for repairs and maintenance were higher than they are today. In the case of technicians, they have not been acknowledged at all by the grant system. For these and other reasons, it is now urgent that this matter be addressed.

The fact that this study was undertaken was an important first step in addressing the issue. While some who appeared before the Study Group recommended a review of the whole grant system, many saw this initiative as an attempt to assess the serious issues presented in the Young Mediation Report and raised at the negotiation table by both NAPE and CUPE. Employees and employers alike saw this exercise as a process that could help right past wrongs and help restore trust and build morale. They congratulated the Government on establishing the Study Group.

There are two additional observations that should be made. The Study Group found it difficult to consider its mandate in the context of providing more "hours of work" for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance personnel. These groups are vitally important to the success of the educational enterprise, and as such should, with few exceptions, be treated as permanent employees with full-time hours and status and full benefits. The current approach to funding treats them more as units of work. A philosophical change concerning these employees is necessary.

When this review began, it was expected that employers would receive considerable criticism. The Study Group found, however, that in the vast majority of cases, employees understood the financial challenges facing employers. Recently, with education reform, school boards have been expected to provide new programs and services. They have had to rationalize the policies and practices of several boards in the consolidation process, with the need to "level up" in regions of the new district.

They have had to do this with inadequate funding. Boards, therefore, have been placed in a position where they have had to "rob Peter to pay Paul." The real issue has been under-funding of the operational grant system as a whole.

5.2 Guiding Principles

The Study Group accepted the following principles as a basis for its recommendations:

1. The basic purpose of a grant system is to provide adequate funds to school boards so they can offer high quality education to all students of the Province.

2. As a result of the reforms recommended in this Report, no school board should receive less funding under the new system for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance staffing than it would have received had the current funding system been retained.
   In addition, no employee should receive fewer hours of work than those provided under the current system as a result of the implementation of this report.

3. Additional funding will be required to implement the changes proposed in this Report. The required funds cannot be transferred from other operational components of the grant system.

4. The funding component for secretarial support cannot be tied directly to student enrolment, but rather to the functional requirements of schools. For all but our smallest schools, there should be secretarial support for the total time schools are open to students.

5. Sufficient janitorial/maintenance personnel should be provided to ensure that the school environment is clean, healthy, safe and secure.

6. The grant system should include a special component for technical support, with a base amount per board.

7. The new funding model for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance support should provide school boards with flexibility in the management of its financial resources. At the same time, school boards should ensure that certain basic levels of service for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance staffing are guaranteed for all schools.

8. The rationale for any changes in hours of work should be the subject of discussions between the employer and employee representatives. The consultative committee proposed in the Young Mediation Report provides an excellent mechanism for such discussions and the exchange of information.

5.3 Recommendations

The twelve recommendations, presented below, are deeply rooted in the data collected by the Study Group. Indeed, they should be read in association with Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the Report and the Guiding Principles presented above.

They relate directly to our mandate and, if implemented, will help address the plight of school board support staff and advance the goal of providing high quality education for our students.

5.3.1 Secretaries

1. That, because of the need to provide all schools with a basic level of secretarial services to carry out functions that are not tied directly to enrolment, the hours for allocating funds to school boards for this purpose be determined in accordance with the following weighted school-size model:

Fewer than 100 students	25 hours per week per school
From 100 to 299 students	30 hours per week per school
300 students or more	35 hours per week per school

Plus one hour per week for every 25 of the total number of students over 300.

COST: We estimate that this recommendation will cost an additional $2.1 million for a 45-week year.

Note: It should be understood that this is a model for funding secretarial services for school boards, not a resource allocation model for allocating hours of work to schools.

2. That, in the allocation of secretarial staffing to schools, school boards provide the following minimum levels of service:

Fewer than 100 students	15 hours per week per school
From 100 to 299 students	25 hours per week per school
300 students or more	35 hours per week per school

Note: It should be understood that this recommendation provides minimum hours of work only for schools. School boards have the flexibility to provide additional hours over and above these minimum levels, particularly for larger schools.

3. That, in the process of allocating secretarial services to schools over and above these minimum levels, school boards consider such factors as the number of grades, the grade

configuration, the amount of administration time, and the use of distance learning, as well as school enrolment.

4. That the school year for secretaries be 45 weeks. The extra week should be used before the school year begins and/or after it ends.

5.3.2 *Janitorial/Maintenance Personnel*

5. That the allocation of funds to school boards for janitorial/maintenance staffing continue to be based on square footage of school buildings

6. That the ratio of hours of work to square footage be increased to 2.8 hours per 1000 square foot per week. This is the level provided nearly a decade ago.

   COST: We estimate that this recommendation will cost an additional $2.9 million for a full 52-week year.

7. That, in the allocation of janitorial and maintenance staffing to schools, school boards consider not only square footage but also factors such as: the age and type of construction of schools, the provision of food services, the community use of the schools, and the condition of the grounds. The uniqueness of individual buildings does not permit the allocation of janitorial and maintenance staff in accordance with a simple statistical formula.

8. That school boards not lay off janitorial/maintenance personnel during Christmas and Easter. No layoffs would occur during the summer for janitorial/maintenance employees working 25 hours or more a week throughout the year.

5.3.3 *Technicians*

9. That an immediate block of funds be allocated to school boards to pay the salaries, benefits, and travel costs of a core of technicians to support the growing use of technology in our schools. This is an interim measure, pending the development by the Department of Education of a formula more consistent with need. Technicians would be allocated to school boards as follows:

Number of Students	Number of Technicians
Fewer than 1000	1
1000 - 2999	2
3000 - 4999	3
5000 - 6999	4
7000 or more	5

COST: We estimate that this recommendation will cost $2.5 million over a full 52-week year.

5.3.4 *Other*

10. That the Province fund the costs of employee benefits, including severance, sick leave and other leaves provided in collective agreements.

11. That replacements for secretarial and janitorial/maintenance staff be provided, beginning the first day of leave, other than for routine annual leave (vacation).

    COST: We estimate that Recommendations 10 and 11 above will cost $2 million annualized.

12. That the recommendations of the Study Group be implemented as a package.

5.4 Addendum

During the hearings, we heard a great deal about the need for more preventive maintenance in our schools. Preventive maintenance is the program for servicing structures and equipment to prevent their deterioration and maximize their useful life. In terms of cost return, it is one of the most effective programs that can be undertaken. Fixing things before they require emergency repairs saves time and money.

Preventive maintenance has been lacking in many of our schools not only because of the shortage of personnel, but also the shortage of funds for materials, supplies and equipment. This shortage of funds was exacerbated in 1996-97, when the rate for repairs and maintenance was reduced from $0.75 per square foot to $0.55. The present rate is inadequate to meet the repairs and maintenance demands of aging buildings with increased occupancy and usage, and should be reviewed by the Government.

5.5 Facing the Challenge

We have recommended that our proposals be implemented as a package. While the estimated additional cost of $9.5 million may appear to be high, the proposals represent minimum levels of funding for school boards which we believe should be implemented for the next school year.

We agree with those who argue that we cannot afford not to provide adequate funding for support services at this time. We must face the challenge of improving these services now. Implementing our recommendations will help repair some of the damage done by reductions and shortfalls over the past few years and address new needs that must be met if we are to provide the quality of education essential today. Our children deserve no less!

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

1. Labrador School District
2. NAPE, Local 2850
3. NLTA, Labrador West Branch
4. NAPE, Local 2853
5. Roger Clarke, Principal, Goose High School, Happy Valley-Goose Bay
6. Susan Burt, St. Michael's School Council, Goose Bay
7. Secretaries and Native Teachers, Coastal Labrador
8. Northern Peninsula-Labrador South School District
9. Calvin Blake, Principal, Truman Eddison Memorial School, Gunners Cove
10. Ward Samson, Principal, Mary Simms All-Grade School, Main Brook
11. Nelson Pilgrim, Principal, St. Anthony Elementary School, St. Anthony
12. CUPE, Local 2212
13. Corner Brook-Deer Lake-St. Barbe School District
14. CUPE, Local 3148 (Ross Grimes)
15. CUPE, Local 3148 (Ruth Kirby)
16. CUPE, Local 3148 (Dean Brake)
17. Diane Curtis, Principal, Main River Academy, Pollards Point
18. Victor May, Principal, Elwood Primary School, Deer Lake
19. David Bruce, Principal, St. Peter's Academy, Benoit's Cove
20. Cormack Trail School District
21. Raymond Bown, Principal, St. James Elementary School, Port aux Basques
22. NAPE, Local 1852

23. NAPE, Local 1851

24. NAPE, Local 1850 (Joyce Young)

25. NAPE, Local 1850 (Norman Chaulk)

26. Susan Hulan, Chair, Cassidy Memorial Elementary School Council, St. Fintan's

27. Stuart Critchley, Principal, Appalachia High School, St. George's

28. Baie Verte-Central-Connaigre School District

29. James Hibbs, Principal, Green Bay South Academy, Roberts Arm, and President, School Administrators Council, NLTA

30. Judy Perry, Secretary, Woodland Primary School, Grand Falls-Windsor

31. David Antle, Principal, Exploit's Valley High - Maple Division, Grand Falls-Windsor

32. Glen Harnum, Principal, Exploit's Valley High - Greenwood Division, Grand Falls-Windsor

33. William Smith, Principal, Grenfell Intermediate School, Grand Falls-Windsor

34. Joan Pynn, Chairperson, Grenfell Intermediate School Council, Grand Falls-Windsor

35. Brian Winsor, Principal, Bishop's Falls Academy, Bishop's Falls

36. Beverley Butler, Principal, Millcrest Academy, Grand Falls-Windsor

37. David Hamlyn, Principal, Leo Burke Academy, Bishop's Falls

38. David Alcock, Principal, Helen Tulk Elementary, Bishop's Falls

39. Sean Noah, Principal, Avoca Collegiate, Badger

40. Jerry Weir, Principal, H.L. Strong Academy, Little Bay Islands

41. Ruby Paddock-Colbourne, Principal and Stirling Morgan, Chairperson, School Council, Long Island Academy, Beaumont.

42. NAPE, Local 3859

43. Ann Benoit, Secretary, Greenwood Academy, Milltown

44. Shawn Taylor, Principal, Greenwood Academy, Milltown

45. Derek Drover, Principal, Victoria Academy and Thomas Tibbo, Chairperson, Victoria Academy School Council, Gaultois

46. Guy Nash, Principal, St. Peter's All-Grade School, McCallum (with supporting statements from Brenda Nash, Marlene McDonald and Beverley Riggs).

47. Madonna Ricketts, Secretary, St. Joseph's School, Harbour Breton

48. Everett Allen, Chairperson, St. Joseph's School Council, Harbour Breton

49. Gordon Sutton, Principal, Holy Cross Central High School, St. Alban's (with supporting statements from the Teaching Staff and Mary Strickland, Acting Chairperson, School Council)

50. Support staff, Fitzgerald Academy, English Harbour West

51. Albert Loveless, Chairperson, John Watkins Academy School Council, Hermitage

52. Marion Sheppard, Secretary, St. Stephen's All-Grade School, Roncontre East

53. Keith Young, Principal, Indian River Middle School, Springdale (with supporting documents from the Staff and the School Council)

54. NAPE, Local 3855

55. Valerie Lambert, Principal, Indian River Primary School, Springdale

56. Elwood Smith, Principal, Baie Verte Middle School, Baie Verte

57. William Broderick, Principal, Baie Verte Primary School, Baie Verte

58. Debra Lush, Principal, M.W. Jeans Academy, Burlington

59. Aubrey Goulding, Principal, Brian Peckford Elementary School, Triton

60. Rick Ledrew, Principal, and Kimberly Budgell, Vice-Principal, Valmont Academy, King's Point

61. John Goobie, Principal, St. Peter's Academy , Westport

62. Sharon Andrews, Teacher, St. Peter's Academy, Westport

63. Jennifer Ash, Teacher, St. Peter's Academy, Westport

64. Lewisporte - Gander School District

65. NAPE, various locals

66. Lloyd Burt, Principal, Coaker Academy, Virgin Arm and Maxwell Rice, Principal, Summerford Primary School, Summerford, representing the School Administrators' Council - Region 6.

67. Dean Wells, Chairperson, William Mercer Academy School Council, Dover

68. Herbert Harris, Bus Driver-Custodian, Riverwood Academy, Wing's Point

69. CUPE, Local 2033

70. Burin Peninsula School District

71. D. Brenton, Marystown Central High School, Marystown

72. Vista School District

73. NAPE, Local 9850 (LeDawn Lane and Sandra Wiseman)

74. NAPE, Local 9850 (Clayton Marsh and Brenda Marsh)

75. Wanda Green Baker, Chairperson, Clarenville Primary School Council, Clarenville

76. Avalon West School District

77. NAPE, Local 5850 (Sherry Petten)

78. NAPE, Local 5850 (Gary Butt)

79. Principals from Bay Roberts-Brigus Zone, Avalon West School District

80. Gary Slade, Caretaker, Cabot Academy, Western Bay

81. Gail Sellars, Secretary, Persalvic Elementary School, Victoria

82. Derek Hiscock, Principal, Persalvic Elementary School, Victoria

83. Eileen Furlong, Former School Administrator, Harbour Grace

84. NAPE, Local 5851 (Florence Chesney)

85. NAPE, Local 5851 (Edward Traverse)

86. Leonard Hickey, Principal, Laval High School, Placentia

87. Mary Woodman, Chairperson, Laval School Council, Placentia

88. Lorraine White, Secretary, St. Edward's Elementary School, Placentia
89. Pamela Constantine, Principal, and Yvonne Mullaly, Chairperson, School Council, St. Anne's Academy, Dunville
90. Avalon East School District
91. CUPE, Local 1560
92. Kathy Hickman, Assistant Principal, O'Donel High School, Mount Pearl
93. William Rose, Principal, Booth Memorial High School, St. John's
94. Judy Gard-Puddester, Principal, Bishop Field School, St. John's
95. Caroline Theriault, Secretary, Francophone School, St. John's
96. Francophone School District
97. Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils
98. Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
99. Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees
100. Canadian Union of Public Employees
101. Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association and Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education
102. Assistant Directors of Education, Finance and Administration Committee
103. Spencer House, Principal, St. Gerard's Elementary School, Corner Brook.

APPENDIX B

HEARING SCHEDULE

HEARING SCHEDULE

Date	Location	Participants
September 30	Marystown	• CUPE, Local 2033 - Brian Farewell and Denise Molloy • Burin Peninsula School District - Murray Cribb and Edward White
October 1	Corner Brook	• Corner Brook-Deer Lake-St. Barbe School District - June Alteen, Ross Elliott and John Hutchings • CUPE, Local 3148 - Introduction - Ross Grimes • CUPE, Local 3148 - On behalf of Secretarial Staff - Ruth Kirby • CUPE, Local 3148 - On behalf of Janitorial and Related Staff - Rod Warren for Dean Brake
October 2	St. Anthony	• Northern Peninsula/Labrador South School District - Percy Manuel • Calvin Blake, Principal, Truman Eddison Memorial School, Gunner's Cove • Ward Samson, Principal, Mary Simms All-Grade School, Main Brook. • Nelson Pilgrim, Principal, St. Anthony Elementary, St. Anthony • CUPE, Local 2212 - Rex Hillier
October 7	Clarenville	• Vista School District - Albert Trask, Vanda Dove, Frank Galway and Kevin Tucker • NAPE, Local 9850 - LeDawn Lane and Sandra Wiseman • NAPE, Local 9850 - Clayton Marsh and Brenda Marsh • Sylvia Blackmore, Chairperson, Balbo Elementary School Council, Shoal Harbour. • Wanda Green, Chairperson, Clarenville Primary School Council, Clarenville.
October 8	Gander	• Lewisporte/Gander School District - Randell Mercer, Shawn Brace, Wayne Gilbert, Glenda Keefe, and Beckie Tingley • NAPE Locals - Sheila Cooze, Glen Sheppard, Bruce Lush and James Langdon • School Administrators' Council - Lloyd Burt, Principal, Coaker Academy and Maxwell Rice, Principal, Summerford Primary School.

HEARING SCHEDULE

Date	Location	Participants
October 10	Grand Falls/Windsor	• Baie Verte/Central/Connaigre School District - Debbie Armstrong and Terry Hillier • James Hibbs, Principal, Green Bay South Academy, Robert's Arm, and President, School Administrators' Council, NLTA. • David Antle, Principal, Exploits Valley High School, Grand Falls/Windsor. • Madonna Ricketts, Secretary, St. Joseph's School, Harbour Breton. • Ann Benoit, Secretary, Greenwood Academy School, Milltown. • NAPE, Local 3859 - Dorothy Pretty and Arnold Edwards • Stephen Dicks, Leo Burke Academy School Council, Bishop's Falls. • Small Schools Special Interest Council, NLTA - Shawn Fowlow, Derek Drover, Jamie Hunt, Jerry Weir, Guy Nash and Gus Jones. • Sean Noah, Principal, Avoca Collegiate, Badger.
October 11	Springdale	• Keith Russell, Vice Principal, Indian River Middle School, Springdale. • NAPE, Local 3855 - Lorne Head, Lynn Normore and Kathy Reid
October 15	Happy Valley/Goose Bay	• Labrador School District - Wilson Lilly • NAPE, Local 2850 - Brian Wall
October 16	Wabush	• Labrador West Branch NLTA - Darren Cramm and Ian MacKinnon • NAPE, Local 2853 - Susan Kennedy, Zeno Mechan, Karen Stagg, Pam Neary
October 21	Stephenville	• Cormack School District - John Dolliomount, Dennis Parsons, Joe Arruda, Brian Feltham, Barbara Barter and Jean-Paul Gignac. • Raymond Brown, Principal, St. James Elementary School, Port Aux Basques • NAPE, Local 1851 - Delores Barter • NAPE,Local 1852 - Joanne Miles

HEARING SCHEDULE

Date	Location	Participants
October 22	Channel/Port Aux Basques	• NAPE, Local 1850 - Joyce Young • NAPE, Local 1850 - Norman Chaulk
October 23	St. John's	• Avalon East School District - Brian Shortall and Roger Lester • CUPE, Local 1560 - Brian Farewell, Ross Grimes, Wayne Lucas and Robert Chisholm • NLTA - Lloyd Hobbs
October 24	St. John's	• NAPE, Francaphone School District - Manon Laverriere, Jackie Snelgrove and Caroline Theriault • Francophone School Board - Peter Smith • NAPE - Leo Puddister, Carol Furlong and Derek Fudge • CUPE Review - Brian Farewell and Ross Grimes • NLSBA/NLADE - Myrle Vokey, Randell Mercer and Leo Whelan
October 25	Bay Roberts	• Avalon West School District - Eric Snow and Noel Hurley • NAPE, Local 5850 - Sherry Petten and Gary Butt • Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils - Denise Pike • Principals from Bay Roberts/Brigus Zone, Avalon West School District - Anne Marie Byrne, Bertha Taylor, Darren Pike, Peter Laracy, Philip Wood and Robert Lundrigan
October 28	Placentia	• Gordon Pike, Principal, Fatima Academy, St. Brides. • NAPE, Local 5851 - Florence Chesney, Gerard Brothers and Ed Traverse • Leonard Hickey, Principal, Laval High School, Placentia • Pamela Constantine, Principal, and Marie O'Keefe, Vice Principal, St. Anne's Academy, Dunville.